



## CANADA'S PEACE BUILDING LEGACY AND FUTURE

We have an honorable history of peace efforts in Canada. In 1957, Lester Pearson received the Nobel Prize for his work in helping create the first United Nations peacekeeping force. Canadians came to identify the nation's peacekeeping role as the country's top contribution in international affairs.

### PEARSON PEACEKEEPING CENTRE

The *Lester B. Pearson Canadian International Peacekeeping Training Centre* was established in 1994, named in honour of Lester B. Pearson, the former Prime Minister of Canada and recipient of the 1957 Nobel Peace Prize for his role in the inception of peacekeeping. The centre is commonly referred to as the *Pearson Peacekeeping Centre (PPC)*. Its name was formally changed to the *Pearson Centre* in 2012 after operations had ceased at the main training site, formerly CFB Cornwallis, in Annapolis County, Nova Scotia.

The PPC trained Canadian and foreign soldiers in the art of peacekeeping and conflict resolution for postings with United Nations peacekeeping missions. It also raised revenue through its specialized training and management courses, which it ran for individuals, governments, and organizations around the world. For over fifteen years, the PPC compiled Canadian peacekeeping press publications called *The Pearson Papers*.

### PEARSON PEACEKEEPING TERMINATED

The Federal government progressively withdrew financial support for the Centre along with our participation in UN peacekeeping missions. In December 1992, Canada contributed 3,825 personnel to UN peace operations. Only twenty-two military personnel are deployed today. Operations ceased and the Centre closed around 2011. The property was sold by the government of Canada to a private individual in November 2013.

With the closing of the PPC, Canada lost an important civilian-led, independent, not-for-profit organization with a mandate to support Canada's contribution to international peace and security. It was a place where civilians and military personnel engaged in education, training, and research on all aspects of peace operations throughout the world. With its closing, Canada has stepped back from the art of conflict resolution, into an ever more militarized approach to security.

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENSE CALLS FOR REINSTATING THE PEACE CENTRE

The importance of the PPC and Canada's peace building potential as an independent middle power has become more and more evident over the ensuing years. In 2019, the Standing Committee on National Defense produced an excellent Report, *Canada's Role in International Peace Operations and Conflict Resolution*.

<https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/421/NDDN/Reports/RP10491893/nddnrp16/nddnrp16-e.pdf>

One of the report's key recommendations was to re-establish the PPC "with a mandate including but not limited to conflict research, conflict prevention and mediation, civilian

*protection, and child soldiers and a delivery model emphasizing capacity building and training the trainers.”*

The Standing Committee presented this and other related requests with extensive background and expert witnesses. Unfortunately, the report was tabled with no response as the government dissolved to call an election.

#### PEACE TRAIN CANADA'S ONE MESSAGE TO GOVERNMENT

Peace Train Canada is calling upon our government to re-establish a center of excellence for peace and justice and to re-establish Canada's peace operations role in the world.

### PUGWASH

The historic and ongoing deliberations of the *Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs* is another incredible peacebuilding phenomenon rooted in Canada.

These conferences began in 1957, during the darkest days of the Cold War. Joseph Rotblat, who was the only scientist to leave the Manhattan Project, gathered with scientists from around the world at Thinkers' Lodge in Pugwash, Nova Scotia. Their mission was to bring scientific insight and reason to bear on the catastrophic threat posed to humanity by nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

It was in recognition of its mission to “*diminish the part played by nuclear arms in international politics and, in the longer run, to eliminate such arms*” that Pugwash and its co-founder, Sir Joseph Rotblat, were awarded the 1995 Nobel Peace Prize. (See NFB Film, “The Strangest Dream” about Joseph Rotblat: [https://collection.nfb.ca/film/strangest\\_dream](https://collection.nfb.ca/film/strangest_dream))

Pugwash draws its inspiration from the Bertrand Russell-Albert Einstein Manifesto of 1955, which urged leaders of the world to:

*think in a new way,  
renounce nuclear weapons,  
remember their humanity, and  
find peaceful means for the settlement of all matters of dispute between them.*

One of Peace Train Canada's advisors, Walter Dorn, sits on the board of Pugwash Canada and served as its chair for three terms.

### LIVING LEGACIES SHAPING OUR FUTURE

#### ADVISORS

Peace Train Canada supporters are committed to the basics of justice, equality, freedom, security and well-being for all. Our values have been refined and strengthened by a host of wonderful Canadian leaders in peace making, especially by the enduring efforts of our advisors, Ernie Regehr, Michael Cooke, Steven Staples, and Walter Dorn (see *Advisors* for more info)

## MENTORS

We have also received tremendous benefit from the work and writings of mentors such as Romeo Dallaire (*The Peace*), Douglas Roche (*Keep Hope Alive*), and Setsuko Thurlow (survivor of Hiroshima bombing and tireless advocate for the abolition of nuclear arms).

## VETERAN'S ASSOCIATIONS

Peace Train Canada is informed and inspired by Canadian Peacekeeping veterans who are supported by two main Canadian Peacekeeping veteran's associations:

The Canadian Association of Veterans in United Nations Peacekeeping (CAVUNP) is a Canadian non-political association of members who have been involved in peacekeeping work for the United Nations. It has more than 1000 members and 23 chapters in Canada.

The Canadian Peacekeeping Veterans Association (CPVA) was founded in 1991 as a national, independent, all Veteran, all volunteer, not-for-profit, apolitical organization with Chapters from British Columbia to Newfoundland.

## PEACE AND JUSTICE ORGANIZATIONS

PTC stands on the shoulders of many amazing peace organizations representing the thousands upon thousands of us dedicated to peace and a better world order. These include Project Ploughshares, PeaceQuest, Kairos, Women's League for Peace and Freedom, Voice of Women, International Campaign for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and World Beyond War to name just a few. There are also many peace centres held within churches and educational institutions across the country.

We are grateful to all of them for their commitment to the possibilities of peace.

## CANADIAN MEMORIAL UNITED CHURCH AND CENTRE FOR PEACE

The kick-off event for PTC is being hosted by the Canadian Memorial United Church and Centre for Peace in Vancouver.

The church building was built by Rev. Fallis in 1928 as a commitment to the soldiers whose memorials he presided over while he was serving as a chaplain in France to return and build a peace memorial. The mission of peace-making – “cultivating right relationship with God, self, neighbour and the planet” remains an important focus of the congregation to this day.

Reverend Cathy Merchant is the minister of community life for Canadian Memorial. She and her family are joining us on the Peace Train. She will be sharing her expertise with us as an instructor in one of the basic building blocks of peace-making - Compassionate Listening.

As Cathy says, “There are no experts in peace. It requires the nurturing of our own inner peace. We need to bloom where we're planted.”